Numb. 22

The TATLER.

By *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* Eſq;

Quicquid agunt Homines noſtri Farrago Libelli.

From *Saturday May* 28. to *Tueſday May* 31. 1709.

White's Chocolate-houſe, May 28.

I Came hither this Evening to ſee Faſhions, and who ſhould I firſt encounter but my Friend *Cynthio* the Lover, (encompaſs'd by a Crowd of young Fellows) dictating on that Paſſion with the gayeſt Air imaginable. Well, ſays he, As to what I know of the Matter, there is nothing but Ogling with Skill carries a Woman; but indeed it is not every Fool that is capable of this Art: You will find Twenty can ſpeak eloquently, Fifty can fight manfully, and a Thouſand that can dreſs genteely, at a Miſtreſs, where there is one that can gaze skilfully. This requires an exquiſite Judgment, to take the Language of her Eyes to yours exactly, and not let yours talk too faſt for hers; as at a Play between the Acts, when Beau *Friſk* ſtands upon a Bench full in *Lindamira*'s Face, and her dear Eyes are ſearching round to avoid that ſtaring open Fool; ſhe meets the watchful Glance of her true Lover, and ſees his Heart attentive to her Charms, and waiting for a ſecond Twinkle of her Eye for its next Motion. Here the good Company ſneer'd; but he goes on. Nor is this Attendance a Slavery, when a Man meets Encouragement, and her Eye comes often his Way: For, after an Evening ſo ſpent, and the Repetition of four or five ſignificant Looks at him, the happy Man goes Home to his Lodging, full of Ten Thouſand pleaſing Images: His Brain is dilated, and gives him all the Idea's and Proſpects which it ever let in to its Seat of Pleaſure. Thus a kind Look from *Lindamira* revives in his Imagination all the Beauteous Launs, Green Fields, Woods, Forreſts, Rivers, and Solitudes, which he had ever before ſeen in Picture, Deſcription, or Real Life: And all this with this Addition, that he now ſees 'em with the Eyes of an happy Lover, as before only with thoſe of a common Man. You laugh, Gentlemen: But conſider your ſelves, (you common People that were never in Love) and compare your ſelves in good Humour, with your ſelves out of Humour, and you will then acknowlege, that all External Objects affect you according to the Diſpoſition you are in to receive their Impreſſions, and not as thoſe Objects are in their own Nature. How much more ſhall all that paſſes within his View and Obſervation, touch with Delight a Man who is prepoſſeſs'd with ſucceisful Love, which is an Aſſemblage of ſoft Affections, gay Deſires, and hopeful Reſolutions? Poor *Cynthio* went on at this Rate to the Crowd about him, without any Purpoſe in his Talk, but to vent an Heart overflowing with Senſe of Succeſs. I wonder'd what could exalt him from the Diſtreſs in which he had long appear'd, to ſo much Alacrity. But my Familiar has given me the State of his Affairs. It ſeems then, that lately coming out of the Play, his Miſtreſs, who knows he is in her Livery, (as the Manner of inſolent Beauties is) reſolv'd to keep him ſtill ſo, and gave him ſo much Wages, as to complain of the Crowd ſhe was to paſs through. He had his Wits and Reſolution enough about him to take her Hand, and ſay, He would attend her to her Coach. All the Way thither, my good young Man ſtammer'd at every Word, and ſtumbled at every Step. His Miſtreſs, wonderfully pleas'd with her Triumph, put him to a Thouſand Queſtions, to make a Man of his natural Wit ſpeak with Heſitation, and let drop her Fan, to ſee him recover it aukwardly. Couſin, This is the whole Foundation of *Cynthio*'s Recovery to the ſprightly Air he appears with at preſent. I grew mighty curious to know ſomething more of that Lady's Affairs, as being amaz'd how ſhe could dally with an Offer of one of his Merit and Fortune. I ſent *Pacolet* to her Lodgings; he immediately brought me back the following Letter to her Friend and Confidant *Penelope* in the Country, wherein ſhe has open'd her Heart and all its Folds.

Dear Amanda,

THE Town grows ſo empty, that you muſt expect my Letter ſo too, except you will allow me to talk of my ſelf inſtead of others: You cannot imagine what Pain it is, after a whole Day ſpent in Publick, to want your Company, and the Eaſe which Friendſhip allows in being vain to each other, and ſpeaking all our Minds. An Account of the Slaughter which theſe unhappy Eyes have made within Ten Days laſt paſt, would make me appear too great a Tyrant to be allow'd in a Chriſtian Country. I ſhall therefore confine my ſelf to my Principal Conqueſts, which are the Hearts of Beaux Friſk, *and* Jack Freeland, *beſides* Cynthio, *who, you know, were my Fetters before you went out of Town. Shall I tell you my Weakneſs? I begin to love* Friſk: *It is the beſt humour'd impertinent Thing in the World: He is always too in waiſing, and will certainly carry me off one Time or other.* Freeland's *Father and mine have been upon Treaty without conſulting me; and* Cynthio *has been eternally watching my Eyes, without approaching me, my Freinds, my Maid, or any one about me: He hopes to get me I believe, as they ſay the Rattle-Snake does the Squirrel; ſtares at me till I drop into his Mouth.* Freeland *demands me for a Jointure which he thinks deſerves me;* Cynthio *thinks nothing high enough to be my Value:* Freeland *therefore will take it for no Obligation to have me; and* Cynthio's *Idea of me is what will vaniſh by knowing me better. Familiarity will equally turn the Veneration of the one, and the Indifference of the other, into Contempt. I will ſtick therefore to my old Maxim, To have that Sort of Man, who can have no greater Views than what are in my Power to give him Poſſeſſion of. The utmoſt of my Dear* Friſk's *Ambition is, to be thought a Man of Faſhion; and therefore has been ſo much in Mode, as to reſolve upon me, becauſe the whole Town likes me. Thus I chuſe rather a Man who likes me becauſe others do, than one who approves me on his own Judgment. He that judges for himſelf in Love, will often change his Opinion; but he that follows the Senſe of others, muſt be conſtant, as long as a Woman can make Advances. The Viſits I make, the Entertainments I give, and the Addreſſes I receive, will be all Arguments for me with a Man of* Friſk's *ſecond-hand Genius; but would be ſo many Bars to my* Hap-

Happineſs with any other Man. However, ſince Friſk *can wait, I ſhall enjoy a Summer or two longer, and remain a ſingle Woman, in the ſublime Pleaſure of being follow'd and admir'd; which nothing can equal, except that of being belov'd by you.*

I am, *&c.*

Will's Coffee-houſe, May 30.

My chief Buſineſs here this Evening was to ſpeak to my Friends in Behalf of honeſt *Cave Underhill*, who has been a Comick for three Generations: My Grandfather admir'd him extremely when he was a Boy. There is certainly Nature excellently repreſented in his Manner of Action; in which he ever avoided that general Fault in Players, of doing too much. It muſt be confeſs'd, he has not the Merit of ſome ingenious Perſons now on the Stage, of adding to his Authors; for the Actors were ſo dull in the laſt Age, that many of them have gone out of the World, without having ever ſpoke one Word of their own in the Theatre. Poor *Cave* is ſo mortified, that he quibbles, and tells you, he pretends only to act a Part fit for a Man that has one Foot in the Grave; *viz.* a *Grave-digger*. All Admirers of true Comedy, it is hop'd, will have the Gratitude to be preſent on the laſt Day of his Acting, who, if he does not happen to pleaſe them, will have it even then to ſay, that it is his firſt Offence.

But there is a Gentleman here, who ſays he has it from good Hands, that there is actually a Subſcription made by many Perſons of Wit and Quality, for the Encouragement of new Comedies. This Deſign will very much contribute to the Improvement and Diverſion of the Town: But as every Man is moſt concern'd for himſelf, I, who am of a *Saturnine* and melancholy Complexion, cannot but murmur, that there is not an equal Invitation to write Tragedies, having by me, in my Book of Common Places, enough to enable me to finiſh a very Sad one by the Fifth of next Month. I have the Farewel of a General, with a Truncheon in his Hand, dying for Love, in Six Lines. I have the Principles of a Politician, who does all the Miſchief in the Play, together with his Declaration on the Vanity of Ambition in his laſt Moments, expreſs'd in a Page and an half. I have all my Oaths ready, and my Similies want nothing but Application. I won't pretend to give you an Account of the Plot, it being the ſame Deſign upon which all Tragedies have been writ for ſeveral Years laſt paſt; and from the Beginning of the Firſt Scene, the Frequenters of the Houſe know, as well as the Author, when the Battle is to be fought, the Lady to yield, and the Heroe proceed to his Wedding and Coronation. Beſides theſe Advantages which I have in Readineſs, I have an eminent Tragedian very much my Friend, who ſhall come in, and go through the whole Five Acts, without troubling me for one Sentence, whether he is to kill or be kill'd, love or be lov'd, win Battles or loſe them, or what other Tragical Performance I ſhall pleaſe to aſſign him.

From my own Apartment, May 31.

I have this Day receiv'd a Letter ſubſcrib'd *Fidelia*, which gives me an Account of an Inchantment under which a young Lady ſuffers, and deſires my Help to exorciſe her from the Power of the Sorcerer. Her Lover is a Rake of Sixty; the Lady a virtuous Woman of Twenty five; Her Relations are to the laſt Degree afflicted, and amaz'd at this irregular Paſſion: Their Sorrow I know not how to remove, but can their Aſtoniſhment; for there is no Spirit in Woman half ſo prevalent as that of Contradiction, which is the ſole Cauſe of her Perſeverance. Let the whole Family go dreſs'd in a Body, and call the Bride to Morrow Morning to her Nuptials, and I'll undertake, the Inconſtant will forget her Lover in the Midſt of all his Aches. But if this Expedient does not ſucceed, I muſt be ſo juſt to the young Lady's diſtinguiſhing Senſe, as to applaud her Choice. A fine young Woman, at laſt, is but what is due from Fate to an honeſt Fellow, who has ſuffer'd ſo unmercifully by the Sex; and I think we cannot enough celebrate her Heroick Virtue, who (like the Patriot that ended a Peſtilence by plunging himſelf into a Gulph) gives her ſelf up to ſorge that Dragon, which has devour'd ſo many Virgins before her.

A Letter, directed to Iſaac Bickerſtaff *Eſq; Aſtrologer, and Phyſician in Ordinary to her Majeſty's Subjects of* Great Britain, *with Reſpect, is come to Hand.*

Mr. Cave Underhill, *the famous Comedian in the Reigns of K.* Charles II. *K.* James II. *K.* William *and Q.* Mary, *and her preſent Majeſty Q.* Anne; *but now not able to perform ſo often as heretofore in the Play-houſe, and having had Loſſes to the Value of near* 2500 l. *is to have the Tragedy of* Hamlet *acted for his Benefit, on* Friday *the Third of* June *next, at the* Theatre-Royal *in* Drury-Lane, *in which he is to perform his Original Part, the* Grave-Maker.

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